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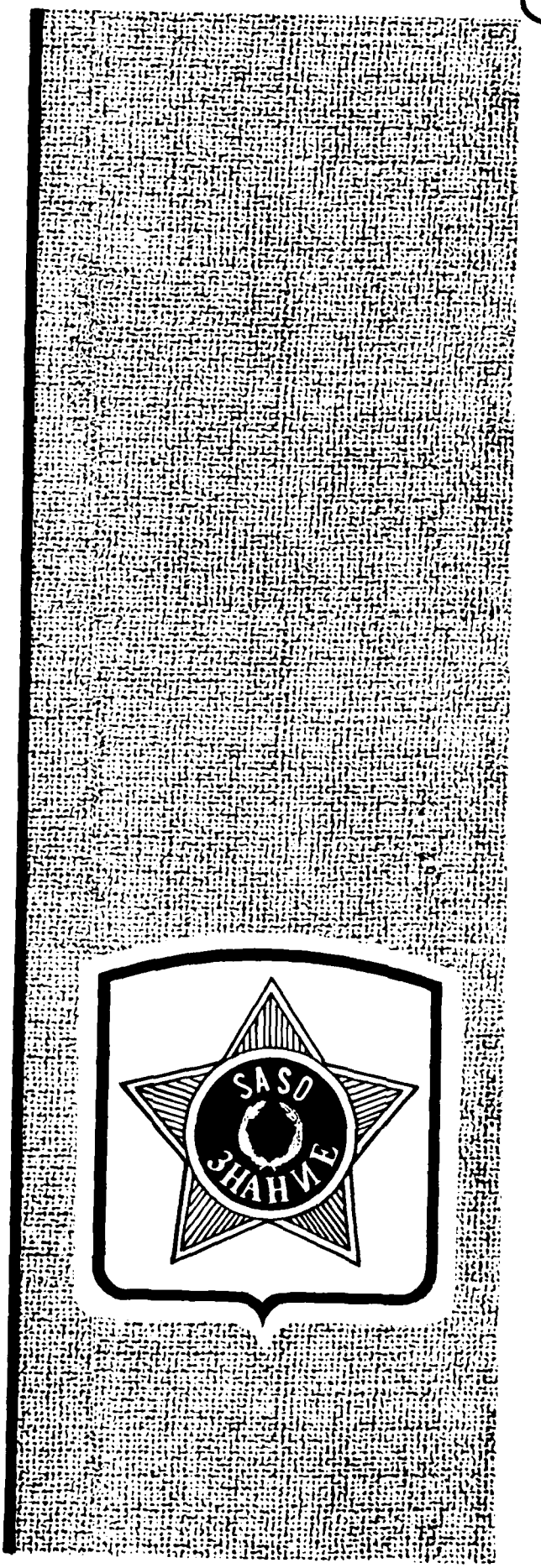
PERESTROYKA AND ORDER

ALTERNATIVE FUTURES AND THEIR IMPACT

ON THE SOVIET MILITARY



SOVIET ARMY STUDIES OFFICE

Fort Leavenworth,
Kansas

90-1310

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)	2. REPORT DATE	3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED
	DEC. 1989	FINAL

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE
PERESTROYKA AND ORDER: ALTERNATIVE FUTURES AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE SOVIET MILITARY

5. FUNDING NUMBERS

6. AUTHOR(S)
JACOB W. KIPP

7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
SOVIET ARMY STUDIES OFFICE
ATTN: ATZL-SAS
FORT LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS 66027-5015

8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER

9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)

10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER

11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

12a. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT
STATEMENT A
APPROVED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE; DISTRIBUTION IS UNLIMITED

12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE

13. ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 words)

14. SUBJECT TERMS
MILITARY REFORM, GORBACHEV, ETHNIC GROUPS, FUTURES

15. NUMBER OF PAGES
18

16. PRICE CODE

17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT	20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT
UNCLASSIFIED	UNCLASSIFIED	UNCLASSIFIED	

PERESTROYKA AND ORDER

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ON THE SOVIET MILITARY

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This article was published in the Military Review, December 1989, pages 3-16.

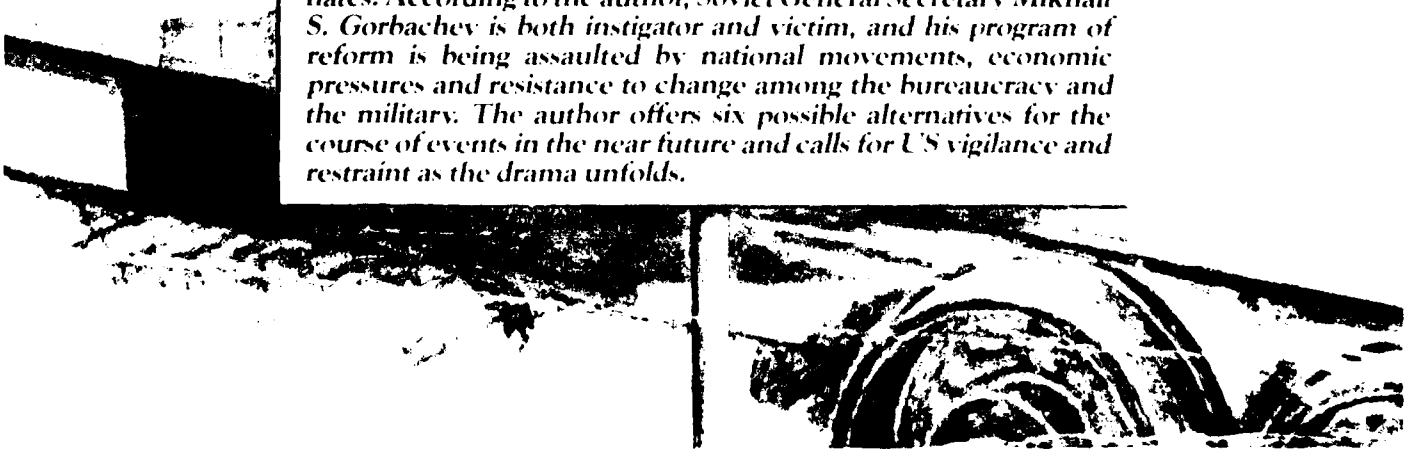
90-1310

Perestroyka and Order

Alternative Futures and Their Impact on the Soviet Military

Jacob W. Kipp

The Communist Party, its "command economy" and the Soviet military have dominated the course of events in the Soviet Union since the Stalinist reforms of the 1920s and 1930s. However, a dynamic era of both internal and external change now dominates. According to the author, Soviet General Secretary Mikhail S. Gorbachev is both instigator and victim, and his program of reform is being assaulted by national movements, economic pressures and resistance to change among the bureaucracy and the military. The author offers six possible alternatives for the course of events in the near future and calls for US vigilance and restraint as the drama unfolds.



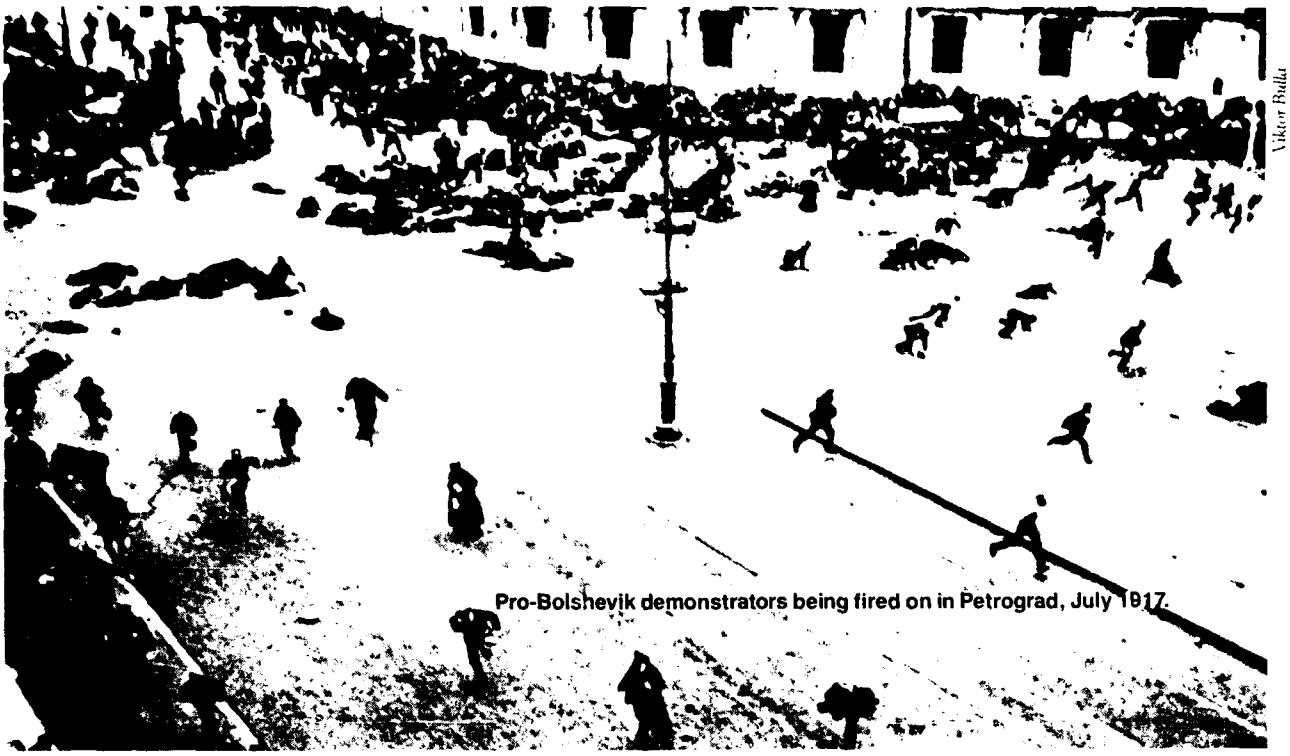
ON 7 DECEMBER 1988, before the General Assembly of the United Nations, General Secretary Mikhail S. Gorbachev announced a series of unilateral reductions over the next two years in the Soviet armed forces, beginning with a cut of 500,000 men and including an overall reduction of 10,000 tanks, 8,500 artillery systems and 800 combat aircraft. Furthermore, he announced cuts of 50,000 men and 5,000 tanks and the removal of air assault and river-crossing units from among those deployed with Soviet forces in Eastern Europe. In addition, he noted that Soviet combat formations were undergoing a reorganization that would make their "defensive" nature evident to all. This announcement brought into sharp relief the connections between military doctrine and conventional forces in Soviet "new thinking" on international security issues and arms control.[1] Its appearance within days of the publication of *Military Review*'s special Soviet issue highlighted the already evident Soviet attention to reducing and restructuring their military forces and the mobilization base upon which they rest. It also underscored the serious attention Soviet planners were giving to arms control in its military-political dimensions.

Gorbachev's December initiatives, however, also highlight the profound changes that have been transpiring in Soviet society since Gorbachev's rise to leadership in 1985. Since Gorbachev's speech, the fundamental changes in the Soviet military establishment are striking. The assessments in the subsequent articles in this issue of *Military Review* will point out, in detail, their significance. The General Staff's response to complex changes in military affairs, however, is the consequence not only of the critical military imperatives that are so clearly influencing Soviet actions, but of changes in Soviet society, the structure of the Soviet state and a host of alliance and international factors.

For the last four years, Western military analysts have faced a process of proclaimed changes and objective circumstances, which, taken together, have made analyzing the political and military-technical dimensions of Soviet military power much more complex. Prudent commentators have stressed the need to watch this process as it moves from promise to fulfillment, focusing their attention on the hard realities of current Soviet military capabilities. While this is certainly a necessary element in any assessment of the situation, it is not sufficient. It does not deal with the multitude of nonmilitary changes that have transpired within the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, which are reshaping international security calculations.

The sweep and scope of change in all aspects of Soviet society during this period are affecting the role and place of the military, and have raised a host of questions regarding not just Soviet military power, but the very future of the Soviet Union itself. We have witnessed an open debate about the system of universal military conscription, pointed criticism of the role of the military in Afghanistan, the beginnings of a debate within the newly restructured Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union over the costs of the Soviet defense burden and the size of cuts the armed forces will have to take if Gorbachev's *perestroyka* (restructuring) program is to have a chance to work. The military's role in dealing with domestic unrest and communal violence has been called into question, even as the Supreme Soviet, in one of its final acts of this session, mandated additional resources for the maintenance of internal troops "in order to apply the necessary measures in cases of mass insubordination by criminal elements." It is evident that this action is intended to provide more forces to deal with ethnic and social unrest than common criminals.[2] In short, the Soviet military is being affected by the profound changes now underway in the Soviet Union.

In Eastern Europe, the Brezhnev doctrine seems to have been buried 20 years after its enunciation by the emerging political pluralism in Hungary and the creation of a Solidarity-led government in Poland. The political context of Soviet military presence in this region has



Viktor Bulla

Pro-Bolshevik demonstrators being fired on in Petrograd, July 1917.

Tolstoy . . . went on to suggest that the history of Russia was a history of a search for "order," in which the carriers of order were Ivan the Terrible, Peter the Great and Catherine the Great, those monarchs who brought "order" by liberally applying the cudgel and knout to their disorderly subjects. Tsarist reforms over the next half century gave way to a cycle of foreign wars, disasters, domestic repression and halting attempts at further reforms until the entire edifice was swept away by war and revolution.

changed radically in just the last year.

These domestic and international changes will have a long-term impact on the political and military-technical context of Soviet military power. What is required now is a broader analytical assessment of these changes and their impact upon the Soviet system. Only then can we begin to address those trends that will affect the military policy of the Communist Party. These elements, in turn, are in the process of reshaping Soviet military doctrine and military art; that is, the supporting strategy, operational art, tactics and force structure.

To grasp what is now transpiring in the Soviet Union, we might recall a poem written by Aleksey K. Tolstoy over a century ago as an irreverent commentary on the official celebrations of the first millennium of the Russian state. Tolstoy wrote during another era of ground-breaking reform in Russia, the epoch of the Great Reforms, when the Tsarist government abolished serfdom, created an independent judiciary, relaxed its censorship, reformed education, recast local government and created an army based upon universal conscription. Tolstoy began his poem with the refrain, "Our land is wealthy, but there is no order [*poryadok*] in it." He went on to suggest that the history of Russia was a history of a search for "order," in which the carriers of order were Ivan the Terrible, Peter the Great and Catherine the Great, those monarchs who brought "order" by liberally applying the cudgel and knout to their disorderly subjects.[3] Tsarist reforms over the next half century gave way to a cycle of foreign wars, disasters, domestic repression and halting attempts at further reforms until the entire edifice was swept away by war and revolution.

Seven decades after that revolution and at the time of another millennium (this time, the conversion of Russia to Christianity), the theme of a search for order invites another generation of Russian poets. Stalinism, the bureaucratized version of Marxism-Leninism that ruthlessly employed modern instruments of control and terror to carry out a revolution from above and "modernize" the Soviet Union, is as discredited as Nicholas I's trilogy of "autocracy, orthodoxy and nationality" was, following the Crimean War. Under *glasnost'* (greater openness), we have witnessed open criticism of that now-discredited "order." With *perestroyka* and the reform of the political system (*demokratizatsiya*), Gorbachev has proclaimed a search for a new order. While he has announced his own course to find the humane roots of socialism and to recast the great ideological competition along nonmilitary lines, the full implications of his proclaimed change of direction or its feasibility remain unclear.

The Soviet system is in a process of reform. However, as Alexis de Tocqueville observed of the *ancien régime* on the eve of the French Revolution, no order is more at risk than an authoritarian and corrupt regime when it begins the process of reform.[4] What we are now witnessing is the openly acknowledged collapse of the Stalinist system as it was imposed on the Soviet Union in the late 1920s and early 1930s. The Soviet Empire in Eastern Europe after four decades has given way to pluralism, ranging from the entrenched national Communist authoritarianism of the "gang of four" (German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia, Rumania and Bulgaria) to political reform in Hungary and a Solidarity-led government in Poland. Gorbachev has renounced the Brezhnev doctrine. Tensions in Eastern Europe have taken on a radically different cast from those associated with the era of Soviet hegemony. Bulgaria has begun the mass expulsion of ethnic Turks. Rumania and Hungary are at odds over the treatment of the Hungarian minority in Transylvania. Memories of the Bal-

We are setting out . . . to return to the prewar situation when Poland was a capitalist country.
—Lech Walesa

The Christian Science Monitor — Neal Merrifield

The Brezhnev doctrine seems to have been buried 20 years after its enunciation by the emerging political pluralism in Hungary and the creation of a Solidarity-led government in Poland. The political context of Soviet military presence in this region has changed radically in just the last year.

kan cockpit, long suppressed, take on a new reality.

These developments are the product of objective conditions that were long in the making and evident for the last decade. In 1979, in

The protection of privilege, . . . the belief that suppressing the messenger with bad news would make the news go away, the trust in brute force to maintain the system, the stultifying inertia of an order without promise were, indeed, the hallmarks of the Brezhnev era.

[Gorbachev's] vision of a Soviet "state under law," a revitalized party in which open debate and consensus reinvigorate its leading role and an economy where central planning gives way to markets in key sectors, may have truly revolutionary implications, but it is more in the tradition of the Great Reforms of the 1860s than the October Revolution or Stalin's Great Change.

Moscow, one of the most popular political anecdotes among the intelligentsia concerned just this ossification of the old order. It seems that Joseph Stalin, Nikita S. Khrushchev, and Leonid I. Brezhnev were riding in the same train compartment. The train suddenly stopped. The conductor came to the door of the compartment to announce that the train had stopped running for some unknown reason. Stalin in a rage rose from his seat shouting about wreckers and saboteurs and ordered that the engineer and fireman be shot. The conductor left hastily and in a few minutes shots rang out. An hour passed, and the train did not move. The conductor returned to announce that no progress had been made in fixing the train and that none appeared likely since no one had the slightest idea what was wrong. At this, Khrushchev rose with an easy smile saying a mistake had been made. He ordered the engineer and the fireman "rehabilitated" and then gave a short speech about how the train would soon be running again, faster than any other train in the world. The conductor left shaking his head. An hour passed and then two. Once or twice the train jerked but did not move. Brezhnev rose. He lowered the shades on both the door and window, then locked the door. From under his seat he removed a picnic hamper and took out champagne, caviar, smoked fish and other delicacies. Opening the bottle, he offered his traveling companions part of his repast. Leaning forward in his seat, he began to rock back and forth, saying to his comrades, that if they would do the same, it would seem that the train was moving.

The protection of privilege, even as the system collapsed around their heads, the belief that suppressing the messenger with bad news would make the news go away, the trust in brute force to maintain the system, the stultifying inertia of an order without promise were, indeed, the hallmarks of the Brezhnev era. By the early 1980s, it was evident that a systemic crisis was in the making; but following Brezhnev's death, a series of weak, ineffective or incapacitated leaders precluded any serious and sustained effort to address its many aspects. With Gorbachev's election to the post of General Secretary of Party, that stagnation came to an end, and a new, younger generation, shaped more by Khrushchev's "thaw" than by Stalin's terror, took up the challenge.

About a year ago, the same anecdote about the train was again popular in Moscow. This time, however, Gorbachev had joined the other three in that compartment. In the new version, after the repast had been eaten and the champagne drunk, Gorbachev rose and walked out into the corridor of the car, lowered the window and looked beneath the train. Gorbachev proclaimed, "My God, we have no rails!" This, the storyteller would say, was "*glasnost'*." It remained to be seen whether *perestroyka* could

"Big Mac" in Budapest. A sign of Hungary's greater openness to the West, rising economic expectations and political changes.

The Christian Science Monitor Neal Menschel

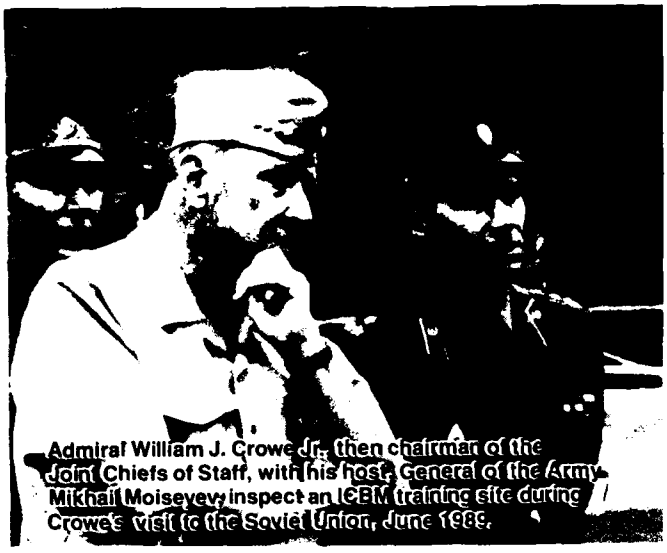
The Soviet Empire in Eastern Europe after four decades has given way to pluralism, ranging from the entrenched national Communist authoritarianism of [East Germany] to political reform in Hungary . . . Gorbachev has renounced the Brezhnev doctrine. Tensions in Eastern Europe have taken on a radically different cast from those associated with the era of Soviet hegemony. Bulgaria has begun the mass expulsion of ethnic Turks. Rumania and Hungary are at odds over the treatment of the Hungarian minority in Transylvania. Memories of the Balkan cockpit, long suppressed, take on a new reality.

make rails or find a competent engineer or fireman.

Gorbachev's intent is to reform the Soviet system, not to abolish it. At the same time, he has clearly recognized that the system requires a radical transformation. In this sense, he is, for all his posturing, a true conservative; that is, one who recognizes that the real threat to the established order is precisely its inability to adapt to new realities. His vision of a Soviet "state under law," a revitalized party in which open debate and consensus reinvigorate its leading role and an economy where central planning gives way to markets in key sectors, may have truly revolutionary implications, but it is more in the tradition of the Great Reforms of the 1860s than the October Revolution or Stalin's Great Change.

Long ago that system lost its legitimacy, but it survived as an ossified bureaucratic order. Stalin had given Russia order, but at the price of authoritarian-totalitarian controls that stifled initiative, condemned critics and suppressed innovation. The Stalinist command economy and militarization of society at a terrible cost proved effective at three things: establishing the political hegemony of the party and maintaining status and privileges of the Communist elite (*nomenklatura*); creating an industrial society; and preparing and fighting a total war. It took its legitimacy less from Marx and Lenin than from its costly victory over Nazi Germany. Internal repression and external capitalist threat existed in symbiotic relationship, each used to justify and rationalize the other.

What has happened under Gorbachev is an



Admiral William J. Crowe Jr., then chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, with his host, General of the Army Mikhail Moiseyev, inspect an ICBM training site during Crowe's visit to the Soviet Union, June 1988.

Colonel F. William Smullen III

Soviet initiatives are based upon a very sophisticated reading of trends toward multipolarity in the international system. The most effective instrument has been to deny the US a "credible" threat by means of military glasnost, unilateral arms reduction initiatives and arms control and confidence-building proposals.

open acknowledgment by the Soviet leadership that such a system cannot carry the Soviet Union into the next century. The old order is dead; the Soviet Union has embarked upon a search for a new order. This search for order has brought with it its own "disorder": demands for greater autonomy; calls for independence in the Baltic Republics; communal violence among national minorities; strikes and demonstrations; severe economic dislocations; and open political dissent and dispute. The outcome of this search for a new order will have an acute impact on Soviet society, the role of the Soviet military in that society, the international system and East-West relations.

The most critical issue concerning *perestroyka* and the Soviet military is the extent to which changes in force structure, doctrine and arms control reflect either a fundamental Soviet reassessment of the utility of force in the international system or merely a tactical adjustment to create a breathing space. A respite (*peredyshka*) is necessary for the Soviet Union to recast its national economy and to modernize its forces to meet the needs of the next century, while using arms control to slow the arms race and counter "competitive strategies."[5]

Past breathing spaces, such as the relaxation during Lenin's new economic policy or Khrushchev's thaw and de-Stalinization, have given way to regimentation and militarization of the society. Yet the present "breathing space" is different from such past periods because of the open acknowledgment of the "anti-democratic traditions" within Soviet political culture, which have, in the past, not only promoted an authoritarian political system but also acted as a sharply negative influence upon the Soviet national security system. This was a result of what one author has described as "bureaucratic irrationalism," which he associates with the cult of secrecy, the concept that the citizen exists to serve the governmental apparatus and the absence, in the face of the regime's total control of press, radio and television, of any effective way of providing honest feedback from Soviet society itself. This led the author to the conclusion: "We do not know the society in which we live."[6] Now, Soviet society has embarked upon a difficult process of self-discovery, and as a result of that exercise, it is confronting the deeply antagonistic contradictions created by repression and violence against its constituent elements. These contradictions can be summed up in what the author acknowledges to be the conflicting claims of "state security, civil security, and national security." The most basic questions of what does constitute the Soviet Union in territorial, national, social and legal terms are being debated. For the first time in Soviet history, issues of national security policy and representative institutions, reflecting social opinion and not the guidance of the party, have emerged as a real possibility.

The contradiction between the Soviet command economy and its inability to cope with accelerating scientific-technological change is driving *perestroyka* in the face of bureaucratic inertia and institutional resistance. The Soviet General Staff has recognized the need for major

changes in the command economy, but stresses those changes that will provide a sufficient industrial-technological base for the economy, in general, and for the military, in particular, in the next century.

Soviet political leadership has championed "reasonable sufficient defense" as a way of "denuclearizing and demilitarizing the Cold War," thereby reducing the evident threat from the Soviet Union. The emphasis is on war prevention, including nuclear and general conventional war. The target of this campaign is the US military-industrial complex. The field of battle is NATO, where the objective is to weaken alliance solidarity. The goal is to isolate the US defense community and reduce support for defense procurement. Soviet initiatives are based upon a very sophisticated reading of trends toward multipolarity in the international system. The most effective instrument has been to deny the US a "credible" threat by means of military *glasnost'*, unilateral arms reduction initiatives and arms control and confidence-building proposals. Under Gorbachev, the Soviets have offered a new definition of the cooperative-competitive relationship between the East and West, one which downplays the military factor and places greater stress on political, economic, ecological and humanitarian aspects of the relationship.

In the past, the most dynamic element of military doctrine was the military-technical aspect. Under Gorbachev, the political aspect has proved equally vigorous. There has emerged a new "military-political science" based upon interdisciplinary cooperation among military experts and social scientists. Military doctrine has become a forum for ideological struggle. At the same time, the Soviets have proclaimed limits to that struggle, recognizing that the interests of humanity in such questions as nuclear war take precedent over class interests. Military-technical decisions, such as the deployment of the SS-20 missiles against Europe, have been criticized for failing to take into account the political dimension of such problems.[7]

[Are] changes in force structure, doctrine and arms control . . . a fundamental Soviet reassessment of the utility of force in the international system or merely a tactical adjustment to create a breathing space[?] A respite is necessary for the Soviet Union to recast its national economy and to modernize its forces to meet the needs of the next century, while using arms control to slow the arms race.

Reform-minded elements within the Soviet military, especially the General Staff, have compelling professional reasons for supporting doctrinal shifts as a means of dealing with the current revolution in military affairs and as a means of keeping pace with the current status of the threat. The military's support for force reductions and funding cuts is based upon a well-calculated program of long-range payoffs. At the same time, military supporters of *perestroyka* have stressed the need to carry out budget and manpower cuts in such a fashion so as to protect the officer corps and support those officers subject to early retirement as a result of the announced reduction in force. The watchword has been to make the shift from quantity to quality.[8]

During the last three years *perestroyka* has not developed as planned. The Soviet Union is in a severe socioeconomic crisis, which has forced the leadership to consider even more profound economic, social and political changes in the face of rising social and nationalist unrest. The leadership has answered this situation by increasing the pace of change and emphasizing the seriousness of the crisis.[9] It is unclear whether the military is willing, over the long run, to accept either a further breakdown of public order or civilian challenges to the status of the Soviet armed forces. Influential critics within the Academy of Sciences have called into question the rationality of the

Soviet war economy, which, they admit, was fine for fighting the Great Patriotic War, but could not provide sufficient innovation in technology or grass-roots initiative to carry the Soviet Union into a postindustrial, high-tech era.[10]

Other critics have addressed the decision to intervene in Afghanistan, criticizing not particular departed and discredited decision makers, but a mentality, a "fog of the Civil War," based upon a "class primitivism" that divided the world into hostile camps—we and they—and fostered such emphasis upon military solutions at the expense of political calculations.[11] Others have been blunter, accusing the military and intelligence of caution and careerism in the original decision making.[12] Still others have raised pointed questions about the lessons the military should be learning from its problems in Afghanistan, including the causes of large losses, the high level of illness, the very high moral and material losses associated with how the Soviet Union fought the war.[13]

Senior members of the Soviet General Staff have responded to this criticism of the military's role in Afghanistan by proclaiming that Marshal Nikolai V. Ogarkov, then chief of the General Staff, had opposed the decision and wanted to check the Sovietization of the ground war. This is the position put forward by General of the Army V. I. Varennikov, who then was serving as a deputy chief of the General Staff.[14] Moreover, Varennikov, who from 1985 oversaw the Afghanization of the conflict for the General Staff, has singled out his own lessons from the conflict. Thanks to the political and military gains carried out during the process of Afghanization of the war, the Kabul government is in a better position to exploit the post-withdrawal political-military situation than the *mujahidin* and can now see "a light at the end of the tunnel."[15]

Minister of Defense D. T. Yazov has been particularly frank in his own criticism of "irresponsible" elements in the press whom he has accused of abusing *glasnost'* to attack the armed forces, undermine unity of command and weaken the tie between army and nation.[16] Charges of "hazing" of recruits and "nonregulation behavior" within the ranks have been singled out as particularly destructive, even as the military has set about dealing with the problem.[17]

Recently, military publications have been giving space to those expressing fears that uncontrolled social change was becoming a threat to the very existence of the state. In one such effort, Karem Bagirovich Rash, a noted educational reformer and a promoter of "musketeer schools" for the military-patriotic education of young Soviets, has addressed the role of the armed forces in Soviet society, stressing the tie between army and people.[18] In this case, the Russian search for order and the role of the army in society are linked. As Rash described this relationship, it was central to Russia's past and the Soviet future:

"A taste for discipline. Discipline and nobility. Discipline and honor. Discipline as a manifestation of creative will. The conscious love for discipline. Discipline—that is order. Order creates rhythm and rhythm gives birth to freedom. Disorder—that is chaos. Chaos—that is oppression. Disorder—that is slavery.

"The army—that is discipline. Here as in the hardening of steel the main thing is not to overheat the metal, for that they sometimes 'let go' of it."[19]

Beyond discipline and the role of the armed forces in sustaining it, Rash stressed the need to raise the prestige of the contemporary officer. His series of articles took on the quality of a manifesto for "*Pamiat'*," the Russian nationalist organization with its xenophobic, antisemitic program. In Rash's view, the military was and is the embodiment of Russian values, linking together past order, Stalinism and the future. Rash depicts Bolshevism's appeal as based on the fact that "it awakened in the midst of the nation the thousand-year-old Russian idea of social justice." He depicted the army as the home of the true "Bolsheviks," by whom he meant soldiers such as Marshal Georgy K.

The Christian Science Monitor — Melanie Stetson Freeman

Nationality protests [illegible] in the streets of Moscow as Soviet Militia a[illegible] Georgian demonstrators [illegible] 1989.

The Soviet Union is in a severe socioeconomic crisis, which has forced the leadership to consider even more profound economic, social and political changes in the face of rising social and nationalist unrest. The leadership has answered this situation by increasing the pace of change and emphasizing the seriousness of the crisis. It is unclear whether the military is willing, over the long run, to accept either a further breakdown of public order or civilian challenges to the status of the armed forces.

Zhukov, the hero of the Great Patriotic War, who became the symbol of patriotism in the face of repression. He went on to say: "All *Afghantsy* [veterans of the War in Afghanistan] are the children of Zhukov. Even the 'turners' [*povorotchiki*] of *perestroyka* are obligated to Zhukov for saving them not only from gas chambers but also from Beria's concept of socialism."[20] For Rash, it is the army, and not the party, that assumes a guiding role in Russian society.

In his commentary on the current situation in the Soviet Union, Rash emerges as a supporter of a "new order" based upon Russian traditions and led by another Peter the Great. In an article advocating "oceanic thinking" as a necessary part of new thinking in a new era, Rash has drawn upon an old theme of naval advocacy based upon history. In this case, however, Rash casts the message in a conservative, nationalist form, citing a comment by one of the common seamen from Ivan A. Goncharov's *Frigate Pallada*. Upon completing a voyage halfway around the world to arrive at Emperial Harbor of Russia's Pacific coast, the seaman asserted: "The world is small, but Russia is great."[21] In a not too veiled criticism of Gorbachev's Vladivostok speech and Pacific initiatives, Rash says that Peter would not only have built the Baikal-Amur Railroad (BAM), but would have moved the nation's capital there as well. Such radical measures were needed to overcome Russia's "inertia," a factor that still exists.[22]

The challenge for the West is no longer to try to fathom Winston Churchill's riddle and enigma, but to grasp the complex processes of change at work before our eyes. It is not enough to note that Gorbachev's domestic and international programs have brought into focus the

A more-or-less united West and Japan, by maintaining sufficient military power, could deal with the security problem in any context short of strategic nuclear war. Decay and periodic domestic crisis could, however, heighten the prospects for confrontations and the use of force.

driving forces of change in the international system, within the Eastern bloc and in the Soviet Union itself.

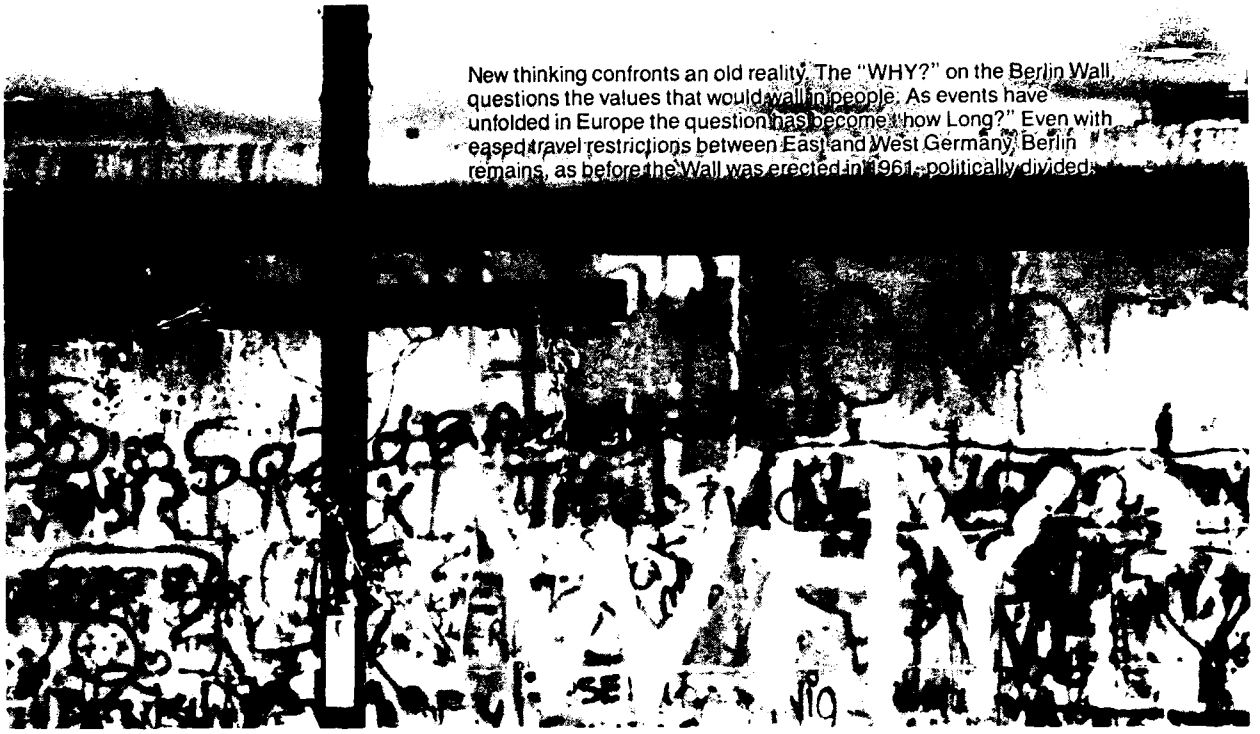
We need to foresee how those forces may interact, both in the short term and in the long run. The interaction of these forces, as it defines an emerging new order, will condition further changes in Soviet military doctrine. Currently debated changes in Soviet military doctrine, their implications for force structure and the role of the political factor in resolving military-technical matters are all also subject to debate in the West, but that debate has been more about optimistic and pessimistic readings of Gorbachev's initiatives. Analysts, for good or ill, have assumed that he has and will retain control of events. It seems time to address those basic contradictions that have impinged upon the reality behind the initiatives.[2,3]

Those who would argue that there have been no changes in the Soviet military under Gorbachev repeatedly fall back upon the vision of a monolithic and unchanging totalitarian state that has the power and will to model the world according to its dictates. Those who see changes and view them positively also assume a control over events, although in this case such control assumes a benign role. Yet, four years into the Gorbachev era, it is clear that there are forces at work that are not being directed according to plan. Before we move into the convoluted explanations of Gorbachev's initiatives as disinformation and deception, we should examine those contradictions within Soviet society and the international system that are affecting this process and apply "Occam's razor" to our analysis, shading our interpretations to the side of prudent action.

While it is very difficult to foresee in detail the long-range interactions of these forces, the need still remains to outline alternative futures and their implications for the Soviet Union and its military. While it would be sublime hubris to claim that the West can shape the details of this new order, we must recognize that our actions and inactions will affect the outcome of this drama. The six alternative futures outlined below serve as no more than guideposts to the evolution of these trends and must, by their nature, be intuitive; that is, an assessment based upon an historical-based evaluation of the probability of Gorbachev's success in his struggle for the future. The first three postulate varying degrees of success for *perestroyka*.

Alternative Futures

In the first alternative, Gorbachev succeeds and in the process recasts the Soviet Union into "just another great power" in a multipolar system. This would put an end to the ideological Cold War and its militarized version, but would leave behind the problem of adjusting US-Soviet relations in an increasingly complex and dynamic international system. The Soviet economy would become interdependent and market-directed, which would involve substantial dismantling of the Soviet war economy. Such adjustments could be negotiated or left to evolve ad hoc. The Soviet domestic regime would become more open and economically interdependent, creating incentives for competitive cooperation. The US global security position would come under increasing domestic and international pressure as its post-1945 justification came into question at home and as other "great powers" and regional powers sought their own political, economic and security arrangements. The role of military power in the new order would be circumscribed. Military expenditures and force levels would decrease substantially. This outcome assumes



New thinking confronts an old reality. The "WHY?" on the Berlin Wall questions the values that would wall in people. As events have unfolded in Europe the question has become "how Long?" Even with eased travel restrictions between East and West Germany, Berlin remains, as before the Wall was erected in 1961, politically divided.

Marginal success of Gorbachev's domestic reform program, but no revitalization of the regime's legitimizing ideology [could make] the Soviet Union increasingly dependent upon economic cooperation with various industrialized or industrializing states. . . A major crisis [in Eastern Europe] that threatened stability in the Soviet Union could raise the possibility of Soviet acceptance of some new order, based upon a collaborative arrangement with an independent, unified Germany, which would dominate a politically unified Western Europe.

that all will develop favorably for Gorbachev over the next five years, with no deepening of domestic crisis, no confrontations in Eastern Europe and no return to heightened East-West conflict. This most favorable set of developments is not probable because, even in the face of Gorbachev's good will and serious efforts, the host of domestic and international problems that have to be resolved or managed are just too complex and difficult.

A second alternative postulates that *perestroyka* succeeds, but in the process regenerates Marxism-Leninism as an ideology capable of dealing with political, economic, ecological, social and military problems of the postindustrial world. This new Soviet challenge would be long in emerging and would have a major impact on the international environment. The Soviet leadership would use multipolarity to maneuver while it reformed the Soviet system and recovered. The leadership would come to view domestic reforms as necessary, but imposed. Soviet entry into the world economy, while substantial, would not challenge the regime's commitment to basic economic self-sufficiency. A powerful, modern military instrument, adapted to the resurgence of conventional military capabilities, would figure prominently as one arm of Soviet foreign policy. Powerful forces and vested interests within Soviet society and Eastern Europe would find this outcome most appealing. This outcome could come under Gorbachev or a successor leadership, if domestic or international developments created a favorable climate for limited systemic reform. The US-Soviet relationship

would be a cooperative competition, based upon both powers' immediate need to retrench internationally. The renewed challenge, when it begins to appear at the end of the next five-year plan, would raise questions about US will to reassume the defense burden carried for the last four decades. This outcome also would appear to be unlikely because the complex circumstances within the international system do not offer much chance of a rehabilitation of Marxism-Leninism, unless Soviet and Chinese reform movements find an alternative and mutually supporting set of domestic and international policies.

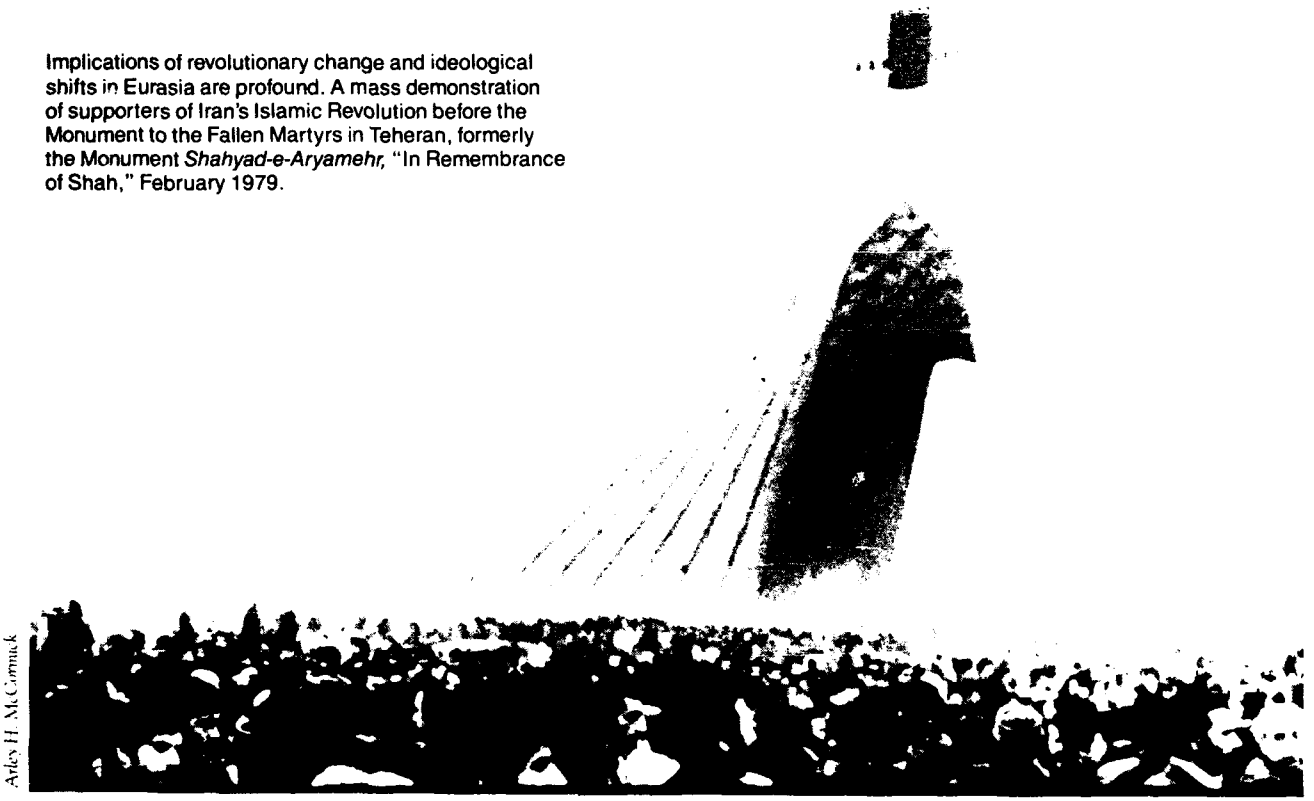
Gorbachev could fail but in the process oversee a mechanism of strategic disengagement and withdrawal from Eastern Europe . . . The Soviet Union would survive as a regional power with nuclear weapons, possessing a potential veto over reshaping the international system, but would play no positive role in adjusting the status quo to a changing environment.

The third alternative would involve the marginal success of Gorbachev's domestic reform program, but no revitalization of the regime's legitimizing ideology. The Soviet Union would become increasingly dependent upon economic cooperation with various industrialized or industrializing states. Shifts in the balance among the centers of a multipolar international system would lead to stronger competition within the West and the Third World. Both the United States and the Soviet Union would be unable to sustain their commitments to regional security or collaborate effectively to manage transition within the system in the face of new rivals. Short of serious crisis, the Soviet Union would retain an interest in protecting post-World War II settlement and general international stability, which could lead to selective cooperation and even regional entente. Conventional military power would be maintained at a sufficient level to sustain Soviet hegemony on the periphery of the empire, while strategic nuclear capabilities guaranteed the Soviet Union residual political leverage. The most severe test for such an outcome would be in Eastern Europe. A major crisis there that threatened stability in the Soviet Union could raise the possibility of Soviet acceptance of some new order, based upon a collaborative arrangement with an independent, unified Germany, which would dominate a politically unified Western Europe. Such a marginal success has the highest probability among all those who assume that *perestroyka* can work.

There are also alternatives positing a failure of *perestroyka*. The most probable is Gorbachev's personal failure, but with the imposition of sufficient, minimal reforms to keep the command economy functioning into early next century. The Soviet leadership would be faced with either accepting steady decline and ceasing competition or pressing competition to some resolution before its residual strength had declined too greatly to affect a transformation of the international situation. It remains difficult to envision any outcome of Soviet use of force that would bring more than transitory gains. Such a situation would also seem to exclude any irrational decision to use nuclear weapons. A more-or-less united West and Japan, by maintaining sufficient military power, could deal with the security problem in any context short of strategic nuclear war. Decay and periodic domestic crisis could, however, heighten the prospects for confrontations and the use of force.

In the fifth alternative, the failure of *perestroyka* could lead to the disintegration of the Soviet system and the creation of power vacuums to be filled by other states. Chaos in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union would invite armed violence, have grave risks of escalation and could set off violent conflicts before any new order could emerge. Nationality questions

Implications of revolutionary change and ideological shifts in Eurasia are profound. A mass demonstration of supporters of Iran's Islamic Revolution before the Monument to the Fallen Martyrs in Teheran, formerly the Monument *Shahyad-e-Aryamehr,* "In Remembrance of Shah," February 1979.



Arley H. McCormick

Chaos in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union would invite armed violence, have grave risks of escalation and could set off violent conflicts before any new order could emerge . . . The profound instability associated with such a disintegration in the heart of Eurasia cannot be overstressed. The multipolar system would in all probability enter a deep crisis of dynamic instability with much greater likelihood of the use of armed forces. Such a crisis in a state possessing a superpower's nuclear arsenal would be an unprecedented event.

and social strife would fuel such conflicts. The Russian nation itself, when it emerged from such a "time of troubles," would likely be more authoritarian and deeply committed to overturning the newly established international order. The profound instability associated with such a disintegration in the heart of Eurasia cannot be overstressed. The multipolar system would in all probability enter a deep crisis of dynamic instability with much greater likelihood of the use of armed forces. Such a crisis in a state possessing a superpower's nuclear arsenal would be an unprecedented event. The military implications of such an outcome would mitigate against reduced tensions and substantial arms control measures.

Finally, Gorbachev could fail but in the process oversee a mechanism of strategic disengagement and withdrawal from Eastern Europe. The role of the Soviet military would be drastically curtailed. The Soviet Union would survive as a regional power with nuclear weapons, possessing a potential veto over reshaping the international system, but would play no positive role in adjusting the status quo to a changing environment. US-Soviet relations would become of secondary importance and focus exclusively on nuclear issues. Militarily, the reduced Soviet threat could prompt force reductions in the West as well.

The independent variables within each of these assessments are much the same. The

Soviet domestic scene is much more volatile than at any time since Stalin's death. Eastern Europe is in a process of pluralistic transition with Gorbachev's renunciation of the Brezhnev doctrine and the reemergence of long-suppressed nationality disputes. Peripheral instability can create problems in the Third World beyond the control of East or West and could draw them into confrontations. Finally, the emerging multipolar system will be much more dynamic than the bipolar, postwar order, creating opportunities for new power alignments and new sources of potential conflict. The Soviet course is being driven by objective forces within that society and the international system. US response should be based upon a similar attempt to define those forces and to adjust the US position to minimize losses and maximize dynamic equilibrium in the international system. At a very minimum, this will require a serious reconsideration of the role of the military in attaining foreign policy objectives in a multipolar system where extended nuclear deterrence may be more of a white elephant than an instrument of statecraft. It is also evident that only time will tell which of these alternatives or their variants will prevail. In light of the uncertainty of the outcome, precipitous, unilateral force reductions incur major risks. It does, however, seem prudent to seek mutually beneficial and strictly verifiable arms control and confidence-building measures based upon reciprocity. Such measures can serve the interests of the West, guide *perestroyka* along positive lines and serve the interests of world peace and security. MR

NOTES

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2 TASS (4 August 1989) and *KZ* (4 August 1989)

3 A K Tolstoy, *Sobraniye sochineniy* [Collection of works] (Moscow: *Izdatel'stvo Khudozhestvennoy literatury*, 1963), I, 384

4 Alexei de Tocqueville, *The Old Regime and the French Revolution* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1955)

5 For a larger discussion of these issues, see Jacob W. Kipp, "Gorbachev's Gambit: Soviet Military Doctrine and Conventional Arms Control in an Era of Reform", and David Glantz, et al., *The Soviet Military in an Era of Reform* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Soviet Army Studies Office, 1989)

6 V Rubanov, "*Demokratiya i bezopasnost' strany*" [Democracy and security of the country], *Kommunist*, no 11 (July 1989) 43-44

7 G M Sturua, "*Bylo li neobkhodimo razvertyvaniye raket SS-20?*" [Was the deployment of SS-20 rockets necessary?] *SShA* (December 1988) 23-29; A E Bovin, "*Inyye varianty*" [Other variants], *SShA* (December 1988) 29-32; L S Semeyko, "*SS-20: Oshibka, no men'shaya chem mozhno bylo by dumat'*" [The SS-20: a mistake, but smaller than one might think], *SShA* (December 1988) 32-36; S A Karaganov, "*Yeshche neskol'ko soobrazheniy*" [Still more considerations], *SShA* (December 1988) 37-41

8 N V Lobov, "*Vysokoye kachestvo — glavnyy kriteriy boyevoy podgotovki*" [High quality — the main criterion of combat preparation], *Kommunist vooruzhennykh sil* [Communist of the armed forces] (January 1989) 13

9 *Kommunisticheskaya Partiya Sovetskogo Soyuza. Materialy XIX Vsesoyuznoy konferentsii Kommunisticheskoy partii Sovetskogo Soyuza* [Materials of the XIX all-union conference of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union] (Moscow: *Politizdat*, 1988), 108

10 N Moiseyev, "*Moi predstavleniya o novom oblike sotsializma*" [My ideas about the new face of socialism], *Kommunist*, no 14, (September 1988) 21-22

11 V P Lukin, "*Istoki krovavykh igr*" [Sources of bloody games], *SShA* (July 1989) 38-39

12 V M Berezhkov, "*Predosterezheniye*" [Caution], *SShA* (July 1989) 41-43

13 V A Kremenyuk, "*Gor'kiy opyt — ser'yeznyye vyvody*" [Bitter experience — serious conclusions], *SShA* (July 1989) 49-50

14 "*Afghanistan: podvodya itogi*" [Afghanistan: summing up the results], *Ogonek*, no 12, (18-25 March 1989) 6-8 and 30-31; Interview with Varennikov conducted by Artem Borovik

15 "*Svet v kontse tonnelya*" [Light at the end of the tunnel], *KZ* (23 May 1989); Interview with Varennnikov conducted by Valeriy Safilov

16 *KZ* (18 November 1988)

17 *KZ* (6 April 1989), (24 June 1989) and (4 July 1989)

18 Karem Rash, "*Armiya i kul'tura*" [Army and culture], *Voyenno-istoricheskiy zhurnal* [Military Historical Journal] (February 1989) 3-15, hereafter cited as *VIZh*; (March 1989) 3-10; (April 1989) 3-13; (May 1989) 3-11; (June 1989) 3-7; and (July 1989) 3-13. This serialized article is still continuing. The new editor of the *VIZh*, V I Filatov, has overseen this publication's transition from a professional journal, focusing on operational and strategic issues, to a mass-circulation journal that focuses on political-military issues from the Great Patriotic War and the Cold War and publishes more archival materials. At the same time, the editors have moved the section, "Platform of the Writer" to the first section of the journal. It is here that Rash's article has been placed.

19 Rash, *VIZh* (March 1989) 7-8

20 Ibid., (July 1989) 3

21 Karem Rash, "*Okeanicheskoye myshleniye*" [Oceanic thinking], *Morskoy sbornik*, (July 1989) 4

22 Ibid., 10

23 For a look at the Western debate on changes in Soviet military doctrine, a good starting point is the debate over the issue in the 1989 spring and summer editions of *Orbis*. See Steven P Adragna, "Doctrine and Strategy," *Orbis*, 33 no 2, (Spring 1989) 165-80; and *Orbis*, 33 no 3, 429-39

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